



# Analysis of the Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council Supporting Halal Certification and the Progress of Indonesian Muslims

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## Abstract

Indonesia's efforts to make the country the center of the halal industry give theological and religious perspectives an essential role when making critical decisions. The Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council on halal products has an influence that is believed to guide and foster the Muslim faith in Indonesia. This study aims to look at the implications of the Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council on halal products in Indonesia, which affect the beliefs of Muslims in Indonesia. The research method used was a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection was conducted through document study related to the research context. The data analysis technique was done by data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that although the Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council on halal products is not legally binding, Muslim communities in Indonesia believe and are attached to the Fatwa as part of carrying out religious orders. Fatwa implications affect the religiosity, spirituality, and inclusiveness of Muslim beliefs in Indonesia about halal products with the involvement of Ulama. The Indonesian Ulema Council's Fatwa on halal products is vital in the



halal industry in Indonesia, which is believed to show obedience in carrying out the teachings of Islam and is vital when viewed theologically.

**Keywords:** Islam, fatwa, halal, theological consideration, certification.

## Introduction

As a country with a majority Muslim population, Indonesia considers religious perspectives in every policy making. The total Muslim population in Indonesia in 2023 reached 237.55 million or 86.7% of the total population in Indonesia (Annur, 2023), influencing every decision that covers people's lives. Often, the standards and requirements are based on the recommendations of religious stores, especially from an Islamic perspective. This religious perspective is taken from Muslim scholars who are Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) members based on Islamic laws and regulations. MUI's response based on religious perspective is called "*fatwa*". *Fatwa* explains and clarifies to provide answers and solutions to questions that the public asks, as well as a medium to answer current and contemporary issues (Makmur, 2019). The institution with the right to issue a fatwa is the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), so the raised response or fatwa is called the MUI fatwa.

We are seeing the potential of Indonesia, with the largest Muslim population in Southeast Asia (Annur, 2023). Indonesia's efforts to strengthen and build a halal ecosystem to become a center in the world halal industry continue to be pursued, especially in developing halal science (Napitupulu, 2021) (Sandi, 2022) and aspects of policy development oriented to the teachings of the Qur'an. Indonesia has not enjoyed the halal industry sector much because halal science has not become the main foothold for developing the business sector. Currently, the halal certification used as a reference comes from MUI, a community organization. This condition makes MUI's fatwa important for the industry in Indonesia.

Through the creative industry, the Indonesian government encourages income generation. It encapsulates the conception, manufacture, and delivery of tangible or intangible intellectual or artistic goods and services with creativity and intellectual capital as its primary resources (Dharmani et al., 2021; UNCTAD, 2008). This encourages the MUI Fatwa on halal certification to provide legal certainty for Muslims and guidance in dealing with social life that continues to change. The basis of the Qur'an that is used as a reference for the MUI Fatwa on the halalness of God's creatures in general, namely Qur'an letter al Baqarah verse 29, Qur'an letter al-A'raf verse 32, Qur'an letter al A'raf verse 32, Qur'an al-A'raf verse 32 and Qur'an al-Jasiyah verse 13 (see table 1).

**Table 1.** Legal Basis of Quran MUI Fatwa on the halalness of God's creatures in general.

Qur'anic evidence	Contents
Qur'an (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 29)	He is Allah who made for you all that is in the earth..." (QS. Al-Baqarah: 2)
Al Qur'an (QS. al-A`raf [7]: 32)	"Say: 'Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has issued for His slaves and (who has forbidden) the good sustenance?' Say: 'They are (reserved) for those who believe in life, for them alone on the Day of Resurrection.' Thus, we explain the verses for those who know" (QS. al-A`raf:32)
Qur'an (QS. al-Jasiyah [45]: 13)	"And He has subjected for you all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth (as a mercy) from Him. Surely in such things are signs for those who think" (QS. al-Jasiyah: 13).

Affirmation in the Quran letter Al Maidah verse 88 Muslims are encouraged to consume halal food and forbid haram and halal food as a form of sustenance that has been given. A Muslim is required to use halal products by the commands of Allah SWT. Halal certification protects Muslims from consuming a product and provides assurance and security (Fatimah et al., 2022). This puts the provision of this halal certification fatwa as a form of application of Islamic law stated in the Qur'an and guides Muslims in Indonesia to determine halal products.



Halal certification is one of the effective ways to increase the sales of a product (Aslan, 2023). For Muslim consumers, seeing halal-labeled products will give them confidence in the product. Referring to Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantee, several manufacturers of non-food products also register their products with the Indonesian Ulema Council's Food, Drug, and Cosmetics Assessment Institute. One form of producer responsibility is guaranteeing safety to consumers when using, using, and consuming their products.

This regulation regarding halal certification also raises its polemics for entrepreneurs. Previously, the institution with the right to issue halal certification was the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Assessment Institute (LPPOM) of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). However, since the inauguration of Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning halal product guarantees, the authorized institution is now the Ministry of Religion. This change has created its polemic because since 2019, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which should have carried out this task, has been unable to carry out its duties properly. As a result, several entrepreneurs use the halal logo from the Halal Product Guarantee Management Agency (BPJPH) and still use halal certification from MUI (Liputan6.com, 2020). It is feared that this uncertainty may affect consumers' views of these products. If this continues in the long term, it can disrupt the economy.

This condition makes the fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) an essential part of Muslims in Indonesia. The wide use of fatwa affects various aspects of Muslim life in Indonesia. This impact encourages MUI fatwas to change various aspects of life. One of MUI's fatwa in the creative industry is a fatwa on halal certification on every product consumed and used by Indonesian people, especially Indonesian Muslims. This condition encourages changes in the lives of Muslims in Indonesia. Seeing this condition, with most of the population being Muslim, MUI's fatwa has implications for various aspects of life.

## Literature Review

Fatwas of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) are not only seen as opinions of Islamic scholars. It influences public discourse and religious practice in Indonesia (Ode et al., 2023). MUI's Fatwa is a guideline for life, a source of inspiration and guidance for the birth of laws. This role is seen as a means for MUI to maintain its role in a dynamic political and religious environment (Sirry, 2013). The Fatwa issued by MUI is issued because of requests or questions from the public or institutions. This makes MUI's Fatwa on halal products essential for people's lives in Indonesia. Although Fatwa may spread identity politics and populism, it influences public sentiment and political dynamics (Hasyim, 2021; Nasution et al., 2023). However, the critical position of ulama in MUI organization for Indonesian society encourages MUI Fatwa to shape the way seasoned people perceive and react to individuals and groups with different beliefs.

Fatwa is an *ijtihad* or joint decision of the ulama. The position of fatwa concerns conditionally or binding, which Muslims must be bound to as a religious commitment. There are also fatwas that automatically regulate Islamic economics. MUI's Fatwa should undoubtedly be used as a guideline. MUI's Fatwa on halal products does not only regulate a joint commitment but is automatically used as a reference basis. The basis of *ijtihad* derived from the teachings of the Quran puts the MUI fatwa in confidence in guiding halal products. The attention of the Qur'an to food is so great that the discussion of food in all aspects is repeated 109 times. While the word *eat*, which is the command word, is mentioned 27 times in the Qur'an (Almasuniyah, 2022).

Although Indonesia is not an Islamic country, there are efforts to incorporate sharia (Islamic law) into state law by standardizing halal products (Hasyim, 2022). MUI fatwa has become one of the primary decision-makers. Reviews scholars and provides input for the Islamic judiciary that seeks to meet the needs of society by issuing fatwas (Sholeh, 2022). Halal



certification in Indonesia is still focused on the food, beverage, pharmaceutical, and cosmetic industries (Ridwan, 2020). Thus, halal certification is one of the challenges in building a halal ecosystem in Indonesia (Atieqoh et al., 2023).

## Methodology

This study employs a qualitative descriptive methodology. This method employs research to depict a condition or social situation (Sugiyono, 2013). Qualitative methods are also known as naturalistic research methods because the research is conducted in natural conditions (natural settings) by collecting and evaluating data in human words and actions (Sugiyono, 2013). Qualitative descriptive research aims to create a systematic, factual, and accurate description or painting of an object, condition, group of people, or other phenomenon with natural conditions (Moleong, 2007). Given the ramifications of MUI's fatwa on halal items on religious life in Indonesia, this approach is deemed appropriate. Documents are used to collect data, which will then be assessed by merging expert perspectives on Indonesia's halal industry.

## Results and Discussion

### Religiosity of Indonesian Muslims in Practicing Islam through Halal Products

The tendency of non-food producers to apply for halal certification is to assure consumers that their products are safe to use. The halal certification provides a sense of security to consumers that the halalness of a product available in the market is guaranteed by the government (Aslan, 2023). MUI's fatwa on halal products encourages collective awareness for the public and business actors of the importance of halal products through Islamic teachings. The attitude of individual religiosity determines the decision to determine halal products. The attitude of religiosity is a complex integration between religious knowledge, feelings, and religious actions in a person (Astogini et al., 2014; Thamrin et al., 2023). Religiosity involves symbols, beliefs, values, and behaviors driven by spiritual forces, making the MUI fatwa on halal products consistent with religious beliefs.

MUI's fatwa on halal products used as guidelines and guidance cannot be separated from the ulama. The role of Ulama in Indonesia has a strong influence in guiding the behavior and knowledge of Muslims. The importance of the halal fatwa encourages the emergence of belief in Islam, which continues to increase. The legal basis derived from the Qur'an and Hadith (see Table 2) strengthens people's beliefs about the importance of fatwas in influencing religiosity. The necessity of halal is clearly stated in the Quran: Surah al-Baqarah verse 168, Surah al Baqarah verse 172, Surah al Ma'idah verse 88, Surah an Nahl verse 114 (see Table 1). This dramatically affects the religiosity of the Indonesian people, who are most Muslims. The implication of MUI Fatwa on Halal products encourages halal certification from MUI to be an Ideal standard that encourages Muslim religiosity in Indonesia.

**Table 2.** Qur'anic legal basis for the obligation to consume halal food.

Qur'anic evidence	Contents
Surat al-Baqarah verse 168	"O mankind! Eat what is lawful and wholesome from what is found on the earth, and do not follow the steps of the devil, for indeed the devil is a real enemy to you" (QS. al-Baqarah verse 168).
Surat al-Baqarah verse 172	O you who believe! Eat of the good things We have given you and give thanks to Allah, if indeed to Him alone you worship" (QS. al-Baqarah verse 172).
Surat al-Ma'idah verse 88	And eat lawful and good food from that which Allah has bestowed upon you, and fear Allah, in whom you believe" (QS. alMa'idah verse 88).
Surat an-Nahl verse 114	So, eat that which is lawful and good from the sustenance which Allah has given you; and thank Allah for His favours, if you worship Him alone" (QS. anNahl verse 114).

Halal certification is a mandatory thing entrepreneur do before market their products massively. This is related to the community's concerns as consumers, especially Muslim consumers, where it has been explained in the Qur'an that a Muslim must consume halal



products. Halal certification is also one of the indicators of consumers consuming these products because the quality and halalness are guaranteed. However, the provision of halal certification has not been fully implemented in Indonesia because it is proven that despite being the country with the most significant Muslim majority in the world, Indonesia has not been able to become a country with the most extensive list of halal certified products in the world (Irianto, 2022).

MUI's fatwa on halal products has a significant impact on the religiosity of Muslims in Indonesia in three parts. Firstly, Ritual. This condition allows MUI's fatwa to measure individuals carrying out religious orders. MUI's fatwa, which comes from the teachings of the Quran and Hadith, can be used as a benchmark in determining the consumption of halal products. This can be eaten as a form of carrying out the ritual obligations of worship as stated in the Quran Surah al-Baqarah verse 168.

Second, the ideology of society. The high acceptance of Indonesian society towards MUI's halal fatwa is inseparable from the basis of the fatwa carried out by MUI sourced from the Quran and Hadith. In addition, the role of ulama from the background of Islamic community organizations in Indonesia makes there a feeling of community attachment to MUI's fatwa. All teachings that come from the Quran and hadith must be a guide for all areas of life. This puts MUI Fatwa in an important role. Individual belief in religious truth is essential; halal products can encourage religiosity. Third, Intellectual, which encourages people to consciously accept the MUI fatwa as a guideline in assessing a halal product. Public awareness in assessing MUI's fatwa as the thoughts of scholars with good religious knowledge and the legal sources of the Quran and Hadith make the fatwa a reference in assessing halal and haram. Intellectuals who have a deep understanding can increase one's religiosity and decide to choose halal and haram goods.

### **Implications of the Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council on Islamic Spirituality in Indonesia**

Belief has a trustworthy nature that can determine a person's decision. Believing in consuming halal products is part of the teachings of Islam. This is explained in the Quran. The emergence of the MUI Fatwa regarding the determination of Halal products is interpreted as a form of obedience in carrying out the teachings of Islam. Affirmation in the Qur'an as in Surah al-A'raf verse 32, Surah al-A'raf verse 32, al Baqarah verse 29, and Surah al-Jasiyah verse 13. This makes religion something inherent. This view puts MUI's fatwa as an essential role for Indonesian people. This condition makes religion an economic commodity. Halal product certification has significant implications for both consumers and product manufacturers. The largest Muslim population provides excellent potential for Indonesia for the halal product development industry. Halal logo certification is closely related to the sacredness of Islam, namely the more excellent attractiveness of buyers with halal certification (Warto, 2020).

The compassionate nature of religion can show a person's identity and emphasize beliefs. Adherents of Islam in Indonesia affirm an identity that can build a brotherhood movement. Through this brotherhood, it can determine a significant decision, including halal products. Indonesians consider halal products susceptible, which can influence beliefs—consuming halal products as a form of faith and carrying out Islamic religious orders. Through the nature of Islam, which can encourage brotherhood among Muslims in Indonesia, the public can readily accept the identity of halal products. These halal products can be consumed and can support beliefs. This religion is quickly used as a tool for economic interests, such as the emergence of halal refrigerator products, halal cosmetics, halal perfume, halal vaccines, and various fields on behalf of Sharia. The halal logo has become something special for products in Indonesia.



Obtaining a halal certificate is required to get a halal logo for verification of excellent and halal product certification. In addition, the halal logo is shown to the broader community so that people can find out whether the product being sold is halal. The halal logo in the Arabic alphabet is the identity of a product specifically for Muslims (Afronyati, 2014: 39). This has significant implications for the sacralization of Islam because Muslims are directed in the Qur'an, as explained in QS. Al-Maidah verse 3. Seeing the great potential of the Muslim brotherhood through halal products that can improve the economy. The Indonesian government has taken various steps to realize Indonesia as a halal industry. The government has prepared various regulations supporting the halal industry in Indonesia to accelerate the halal industry (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** Indonesian Government Regulations Support the Halal Industry.

Regulation	Organize
Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantee.	This law regulates the requirements for guaranteeing halal products circulating in Indonesia and aims to provide guarantees and protection for halal products consumed by the Indonesian people, especially Indonesian Muslims (Safitri, 2021).
Government Regulation No. 31 of 2019 concerning Implementation Regulations of Law No. 33 of 2014 (JPH Law)	This regulation provides guidelines for the implementation of the halal product guarantee law. Contains an explanation of the implementation of halal product assurance (JPH), inter-institutional cooperation in the implementation of halal product assurance, the amount of halal certification fees, and the stages of the obligation of halal certified product types.
Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 26 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Halal Product Guarantee.	This regulation regulates the procedures for implementing halal product assurance, including how to obtain halal certification.
Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 982 of 2019 concerning Halal Certification Services.	This decree explains the requirements and procedures for halal certification services. It contains the determination of halal certification services in the transitional period, and how the roles of BPJPH, MUI, and LPPOM MUI in providing halal certification services.
Government Regulation No. 39 of 2021 concerning Implementation of Halal Product Implementation.	This regulation further clarifies the implementation of halal product guarantees, including the requirements for business actors to obtain halal certification, both goods and services.

Indonesia uses strict halal standards for every product circulating in Indonesia. To issue halal certification, the government prepares at least three institutions for the halal product testing process, including testing laboratories, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), and the Halal Product Guarantee Management Agency (BPJPH) (Irianto, 2022). The government involves sample testing laboratories from Islamic community organizations, such as Muhammadiyah Nahdatul Ulama (NU), and the increase in the number of testing laboratories aims to shorten the time between product tests. The consequences of products that do not take care of halal certification are administrative sanctions (Mariska & Ng, 2019), loss of market (Medina, 2022), damage to reputation (Safitri, 2021), and other consequences. With several changes, entrepreneurs should also seek guidance from the newly formed Halal Product Guarantee Certification Agency (BPJPH) to ensure halal certification requirements (Medina, 2022).

Despite a series of regulations and policies regarding halal certification. A person's spirituality is decisive in the decision to determine halal products. Spirituality also affects consumer attitudes. Meanwhile, religiosity affects the perception and consumption behavior of halal-labeled food. MUI's fatwa, which determines halal products, strongly influences society. The involvement of ulama from various Islamic community organizations in determining the MUI Fatwa can encourage the spirituality of the Indonesian people. Ulama can provide guidance, teach about spirituality, explain the importance of choosing halal products, and teach about the importance of belief in halal labels. Religion is vital in determining choices in consumers of a product. Indonesian Muslims with higher religiosity tend to have a more positive perception of halal products and are more likely to buy them. This is associated with halal products and religious values and beliefs.



## **Implications of MUI Fatwa on the Inclusiveness of Muslim Beliefs in Indonesia**

Knowledge of halal products determines a positive impact on the perception and purchasing behavior of halal products. The knowledge of Indonesian people familiar with halal certificates from MUI is well related to religiosity beliefs that strengthen religious values and beliefs. Higher levels of religiosity tend to have a more positive perception of halal products. This raises public awareness of the importance of halal products. The value process places religious beliefs that are always emphasized in halal products. Starting from halal products are considered healthier and show obedience in carrying out Islamic teachings. Inclusiveness encourages recognizing and appreciating the existence or existence of differences and diversity.

The increasing inclusiveness of Muslim beliefs in Indonesia regarding the MUI fatwa on halal products has led to a movement that leads to an attitude of choice. The inclusiveness of Muslims' beliefs in Indonesia towards MUI's fatwa makes it continuously await its decision and becomes a consideration for every policy that the government and Indonesian society will determine. This means that Islamic values have an essential position in determining policies. In the Quran letter, An-Nahl verse 114 confirms the value of Islam religion has regulated in depth about halal products and the command to run it.

"So, eat what is halal and good from the sustenance that Allah has given you; and thank Allah for His favors, if you worship Him alone" (QS. An-Nahl [16]: 114).

The halal certification fatwa emphasizes the standardization of halal products and improvements in the process (Mabkhot, 2023). This strategy will improve product quality, safety, and manufacturing processes to fulfill halal certification requirements. The existence of halal certification has helped build consumer trust and confidence to use halal products. Fatwa not only plays a role in providing halal certification but also gives products a position as trusted and ethical (Mabkhot, 2023). Halal certificates are not only interpreted as legacies in the perspective of Islam but as a tool to build consumer confidence and take advantage of the increased awareness of the perception of halal certification as a valuable attribute. Halal certification can significantly and positively affect financial performance (Urumsah & Puspitasari, 2021). The emerging halal industry innovation is inseparable from market expansion to capitalize on the increasing demand for halal products.

The high inclusiveness of Muslim beliefs in Indonesia regarding the MUI fatwa has an impact on strengthening the Islamic economy in Indonesia. The fatwa on halal certification has contributed to developing Islamic economic strategies in Indonesia (Yazid et al., 2020). The halal industry has been recognized as an essential component of the Islamic economy. Through the doctrine of carrying out the teachings of Islam, the halal industry is associated with a form of religious observance of a person adhering to Islamic teachings.

### **The Problem of Halal Certification: Institutionalisation and Changes in Indonesian Muslim Society**

The role of institutions in encouraging halal certification is vital, considering that Indonesia wants to become the most halal-certified product in the world. Institutional strengthening is an essential strategy in encouraging halal certification in Indonesia. It is crucial to increase the capacity of halal certification bodies. It starts with testing laboratories that can encourage the acceleration of testing time, strengthening the institutional and organizational structure, conducting economic analysis, applying a holistic approach, and applying a critical perspective to promote halal certification.

The emergence of changes in authorized institutions based on the Law on Halal Product Guarantee (JPH) also adds to the problem, such as the increasingly long process of issuing halal certification. It is feared that it will be prone to conflicts of interest. Business actors are



still charged fees and need to regulate their accountability and performance transparency (Simbolon & Hidayat, 2021). In addition, the amount of costs to administer halal certification is a problem for business actors (Sidiq, 2022). The halal label issued by the Assessment Institute for Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics of the Indonesian Ulema Council (LPPOM MUI) has a time limit.

Halal certification bodies in Indonesia have the authority to conduct inspections in the business world (Lestari et al., 2023). Inspections are carried out to ensure that business actors can comply with the requirements in registering their products as halal certified. However, the institution must also be vital in its organizational structure so that the acceleration of halal certification can run effectively and efficiently. Due to the transfer of authority in issuing halal certification, the polemics have worried the public. Therefore, institutional strengthening must be achieved by developing a solid organizational structure to support the effective implementation of halal certification requirements.

Indonesian people who have a high level of trust in halal certification from MUI often experience perception bias and misinformation when other institutions outside MUI issue halal logos. The polemics over halal certification have emerged in the community regarding the non-involvement of MUI in providing halal certification (Kominfo.go.id, 2021). This condition has brought pro and contra reactions in the community because so far, MUI has been considered an institution trusted by Indonesian Muslims in providing fatwas and other recommendations from a religious perspective. The belief that Indonesian people considering MUI through its fatwa can guide and provide knowledge without any interest other than religious interests makes involvement in determining halal products essential.

Based on Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantee (JPH), the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH), based on halal fatwa from MUI, is authorized to issue halal certification. MUI has the authority to determine the halalness of a product through a halal fatwa hearing based on product standards and halalness (Kemenag.go.id, 2022). After MUI issues a halal product determination, does BPJPH provide halal certificates to business actors. BPJPH can only issue a halal certificate if MUI has conducted a fatwa hearing. MUI's halal determination is the fulfillment of religious law aspects, and the halal certificate from BPJPH is a form of administration of religious law to state law. This process flow of determining halal products is a form of strengthening certification bodies to increase the credibility of halal certification. This can contribute to the growth and development of the halal industry. MUI no longer has the authority to issue halal certification because it will conflict with Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantee with the Ministry of Religion as the institution authorized to issue halal certification. As a result, entrepreneurs who previously had halal certificates from LPPOM MUI must change by applicable regulations.

## **Conclusion**

The Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council on halal products in Indonesia is not in the order of legislation as formal Indonesian law. However, its position is essential in influencing the life of the Islamic community in Indonesia. Fatwas that involve ulama in decisions can bind and be obeyed by Muslims who feel they have ties. This is considered to influence the value of religiosity, spirituality, and guidelines in determining halal products for the people of Indonesia. Although efforts to build a halal industry in Indonesia still need to overcome obstacles caused by facilities and regulations. The Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulama Council is still believed by the Indonesian people in determining halal standardization. This condition is inseparable from the dynamics of the development of Islam in Indonesia, which still believes in the role of ulama from various Islamic community organizations in fostering society and encouraging an inclusiveness of recognition. The Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council on halal products is vital in the halal industry in Indonesia, which is believed to show obedience in carrying out the teachings of Islam.





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